



Rio Rains



The CoCoRaHS Newsletter of the Rio Grande Valley

Issue I

Summer 2012

NWS Brownsville

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Welcome to the "Rio Rains" CoCoRaHS newsletter

By Juan Alanis

It is with much excitement to introduce "Rio Rains", the official CoCoRaHS newsletter for the Rio Grande Valley. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep all observers and residents informed and up to date about the latest weather trends, headlines and happenings in the CoCoRaHS program.

The CoCoRaHS program is truly a team effort at all levels. From the staff at the national CoCoRaHS headquarters in Colorado, to all the state, regional and local coordinators across the nation and of

course, the most important people of all, our dedicated observers. It is because of the true dedication of our observers that the CoCoRaHS program has been such a huge success across Texas and the nation.

CoCoRaHS is now operating in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia and now Canada. CoCoRaHS hopes to have 30,000 to 40,000 active observers by the end of 2013.

Once again, a big thanks to all our dedicated observers, as well as to all Co-

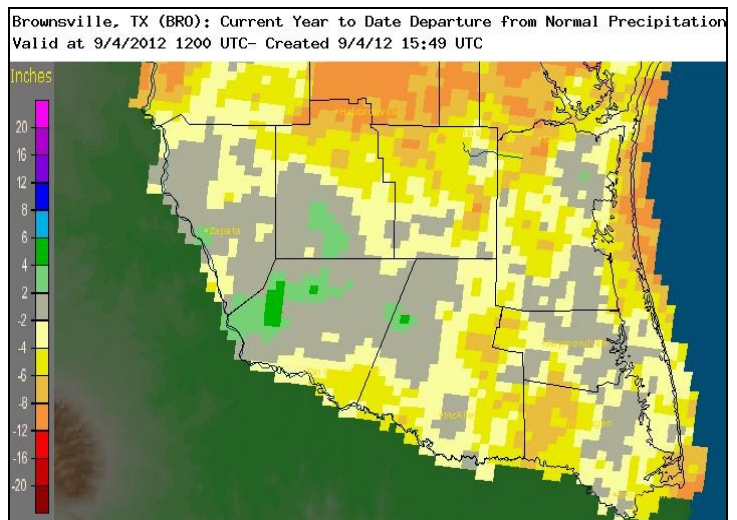


CoRaHS staff and coordinators. It is because of you that CoCoRaHS has become the huge success it is today.

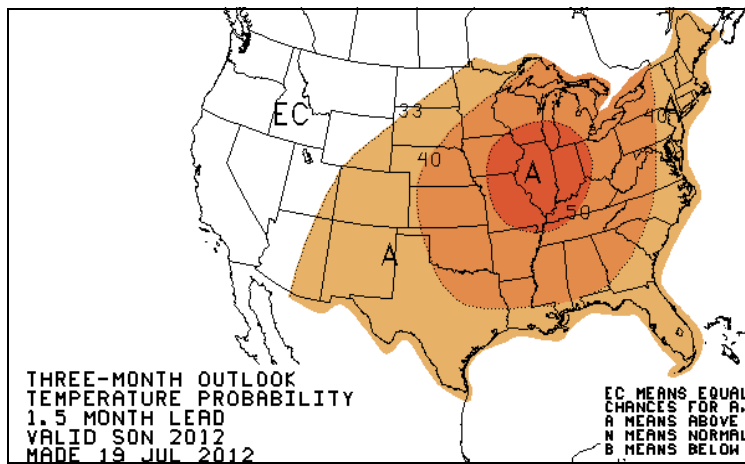
Drought eased by spring rains; El Nino may visit.

By Juan Alanis

Springtime brought a series of disturbances that resulted in more plentiful rainfall and severe weather. And while LaNina, the abnormal cooling of the equatorial Pacific Ocean waters officially ended during the spring., it may not have been the cause of the rain and severe



Outlooks: Fall expected to be warmer than normal

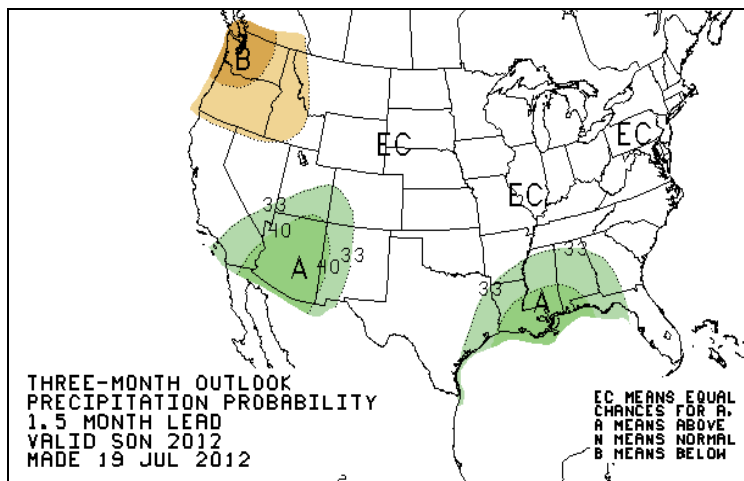


<-Temperature outlook from the Climate Prediction Center for Sept-Oct-Nov 2012.

weather. The cause may have been related to a shift of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO).

While the La Nina pattern was similar during the winter of 2011 and 2012, the NAO shifted to a positive state this past winter. A positive NAO usually results in more upper level low pressure troughs in the west and upper level ridges in the east and southeast. These upper level troughs may have provided the lift needed for low level moisture to become rain and thunderstorms this past spring.

The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) is forecasting an El Nino to develop late fall and winter. This would typically mean above normal rains across the southwest and Texas, including the RGV, with cooler than normal temperatures. Outlooks from the CPC currently predict fall to be warmer than normal with average rains. Next spring may be wetter and cooler but El Nino is no guarantee for this to happen.



<-Precipitation outlook for Sept-Oct-Nov

Want to know more about the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO)? Log on to www.ideo.columbia.edu/res/pi/NAO/

CoCoRaHS and National Weather Service now on social media

By Juan Alanis

Social Media networks are now a great way to stay in contact with fellow CoCoRaHS observers and coordinators as well as the National Weather Service. Your Brownsville National Weather Service office, as are most NWS offices, are now on Facebook and Twitter

Simply log onto

www.facebook.com/US-NationalWeatherService.Brownsville.gov Forecasts, climate updates, interesting pictures, links to weather stories and sites are just a few things you will find on the NWS facebook site. You can even post your comments to the NWS. Log on to-

day! And CoCoRaHS observers, there are also pages on facebook for you. The page for the south Texas region can be found at www.facebook.com/cocorahsctx.

The national CoCoRaHS page can be found at www.facebook.com/CoCoRaHS.

The National Weather Service and CoCoRaHS are also on twitter. Simply log on to twitter and we are at [@NWSBrownsville](https://twitter.com/NWSBrownsville) and [@CoCoRaHS](https://twitter.com/CoCoRaHS).



CoCoRaHS Webinars cover many meteorology topics

Would you like to learn about the weather from experts and talk to them? CoCoRaHS has started a new series about the weather titled "CoCoRaHS Weather Talk" The series consists of monthly web seminars (webinars) featuring engaging experts from the world of meteorology, climatology and related fields. Each webinar is approximately 60 minutes in length and allow audience members to ask questions to the experts.

The monthly webinars are free and open for everyone to participate. All that is required is registration through the CoCoRaHS web site at www.cocorahs.org.

Upcoming CoCoRaHS Webinar Schedule:

Thursday September 20, 2012, 12PM CDT

So you want to be a meteorologist?

Dave Changnon, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL

Thursday October 18, 2012, 12PM CDT

When Howling Wolves greet the Northern Lights

Jan Curtis, USDA/NRCS, Portland, Oregon

Future webinar topics and dates will be announced in future issues of the CoCoRaHS newsletter

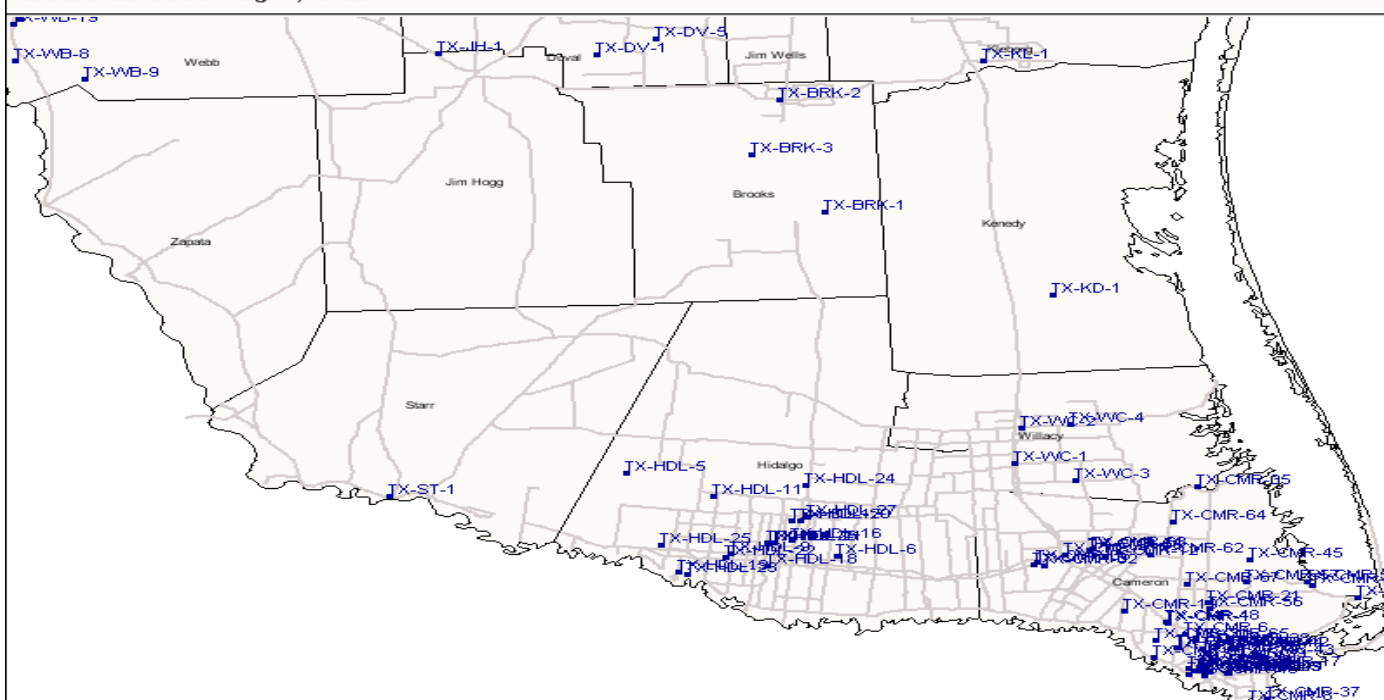
More CoCoRaHS observers needed across the Rio Grande Valley

There are already many dedicated CoCoRaHS Observers throughout the Rio Grande Valley. However, more observers are needed. The map below shows the location of current observers here in the valley. As you can see, there are many gaps. There are currently no observers in Zapata County and only one in Starr, Jim Hogg and Kenedy Counties. Plus observers are needed in many areas of Hidalgo County, including Donna, Mercedes, Weslaco, Ed-

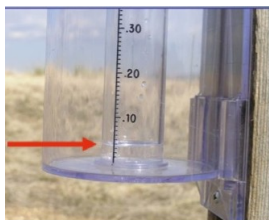
couch-Elsa and the US 281 corridor along the river. Observers are also needed in all other counties to fill the gaps.

Requirements for becoming a CoCoRaHS observer are a high enthusiasm for the weather, be willing to report rainfall data (including zero reports) on a daily basis, and have an official CoCoRaHS rain gauge, which is available through the CoCoRaHS web site. For more information on signing up, log onto www.cocorahs.org or call Geoffrey Bogorad at 956-504-1432 or Juan Alanis at 956-251-3996.

Active Stations
Brownsville/McAllen Region, Texas



CoCoRaHS Tips



When measuring rainfall, please do not round. For example, if your gauge measures 0.04" please do not round to 0.05" or 0.10".....please report the exact amount...0.04"



Dust blowing across the highway or crops brown and wilted? Then submit a "Drought Impact Report." Your observations will help meteorologists, agricultural officials and the National

Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) develop and implement measures to reduce societal vulnerability to drought. The NDMC, based at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln stresses preparation and risk management rather than crisis management. For more information on Drought Impact Reports, go to http://www.cocorahs.org/DroughtImpacts-Guide_Final2_2010.html

CoCoRaHS for Schools

Teachers, make CoCoRaHS a part of your classroom. Sign your school up and get your students involved in observing the weather and measuring rainfall. Plus, CoCoRaHS staff have worked with science teachers to develop lesson plans and hands on activities for a variety of grade levels. The lesson plans meet all Na-

tional Science Education Standards. For more information about CoCoRaHS in the classroom, email: education@cocorahs.org. The National Weather Service also has lesson plans for hands on weather activities. For information, log onto www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/jetstream



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National Weather Service Mission Statement

The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, hydrologic and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public and the global community.

Brief National Weather Service History

The National Weather Service had its beginnings in the early history of the United States. Weather has always been important to the citizenry of this country, and this was especially true during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The beginning of the National Weather Service we know today started on February 9th, 1870 when President Ulysses Grant signed a joint resolution of Congress authorizing the Secretary of War to establish a national weather service.